

REMARKS

The Office Action dated March 20, 2006 has been reviewed, and the comments of the U.S. Patent Office have been considered. Claims 1-16 are pending in this application.

The Office Action at page 2 asserts that the amendments made to independent claim 1 in the February 13, 2006 Amendment have not been given patentable weight because those amendments were made to the preamble (the preamble of independent claim 11 was not amended in the February 13 Amendment). The Office Action relies on *In re Hirao and Kropa v. Robie* for the proposition that "a preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone" (emphasis added). Applicants respectfully traverse the Office Action's assertion because the body of claim 1 plainly does depend on the preamble for completeness where the preamble recites, for example, "a dynamoelectric machine mechanically coupled to an internal combustion engine by a shaft" Thus, applicants' prior amendment to the preamble was an amendment to the claim limitations and should have been fully considered.

Nonetheless, in order to advance prosecution, claims 1 and 11 are amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that the dynamoelectric machine drives the shaft to start the engine in rotation. These amendments are appropriate under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because they clarify features considered previously in the above-mentioned preamble. Accordingly, the amendments to claims 1 and 11 do not raise new issues requiring further search and/or review or raise issues that have not been considered previously. It is respectfully requested that the aforementioned amendments be entered.

Claims 1-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Kawaguchi (U.S. Patent No. 4,961,403) in view of Moore (U.S. Patent No. 6,306,056 B1). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The applied references fail to show or describe a method or a range extender in which a dynamoelectric machine drives a shaft to start an internal combustion engine in rotation and, after a meeting predetermined temperature threshold, fuel is supplied to the engine and the ignition is activated, and the activation of the dynamoelectric machine for operation as a

generator to provide an electrical current output after a period of engine prime mover operation. The Office Action at pages 4, 5, and 6 asserts that Moore describes the features of claims 1-18 at "column 5, line 50 to column 6, line 63" but Moore does not have any text at most of this citation. Accordingly, no grounds for the rejection have been provided in this regard and the Office Action thus fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Moreover, the applied references fail to show or describe the features of claims 1 and 11. For example, the applied references fail to disclose an electric motor that drives a shaft to start an engine in rotation. Kawaguchi fails to describe how engine 16 is rotationally started, or describe any arrangement in which generator 20 drives engine 16 in rotation. Rather, Kawaguchi is limited to an arrangement where engine 16 drives generator 20 to produce electrical energy. *See* Kawaguchi at col. 1, lines 13-16, and col. 3, lines 6-8. Moore likewise fails to describe how first engine 12 and second engine 18 are rotationally started, or describe any arrangement in which motor/generator 28 drives engines 12 or 18 in rotation. Moore only describes motor/generator 28 as providing torque directly to the wheels of a vehicle. *See* Moore at col. 1, lines 29-30 and 39-41, and col. 2, lines 33-35 and 54-55. Moore does not describe the torque generated by motor/generator 28 as being provided to engines 12 or 18.

Likewise, Kawaguchi and Moore fail to disclose anything regarding a motor rotating an engine without any fuel or ignition supplied to the engine, achieving a predetermined temperature of the engine, supplying fuel and ignition to the engine, and then activating the motor to function as a generator.

For the foregoing reasons, Kawaguchi and Moore, alone or in combination, fail to disclose all of the features recited in the independent claims, or in the dependent claims thereof. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

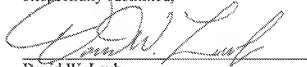
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application and the prompt allowance of the pending claims.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution of the application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 50-3840. **This paragraph is intended to be a CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).**

Respectfully submitted,



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